

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 SS-15
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT BRIEFING - MARCH 25

1. FOLLOWING Q'S AND A'S ARE EXCERPTED FROM THE
MARCH 25 DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING,
2. Q: THE TIMES REPORTED THIS MORNING THAT THE
GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE CALLS THE KATANGAN INVASION "AN OUT
RIGHT ACT OF INTERNATIONAL AGGRESSION WHILE ANGOLA
DESCRIBES IT AS MERELY EXILES RETURNING HOME TO OPPOSE
THE GOVERNMENT OF GEN. MOBUTU, WHILE CHINA DESCRIBES IT
AS A PLANNED INVASION BY THE NEW CZARS IN MOSCOW. I
WAS WONDERING, FIRST, DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT FEEL
THAT THEPEOPLESREPUBLIC OF CHINA IS ACCURATE AND FAIR
IN THIS ASSESSMENT?

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A: I'VE GIVEN OUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THE INCURSION INTO
SHABA...

3. Q: YES, I UNDERSTAND... IN OTHER WORDS YOU DISAGREE
WITH THE CHINESE, IS THIS CORRECT?

A: I'M SAYING, I'VE GIVEN OUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THIS

INCURSION INTO SHABA AND WE'VE CHARACTERIZED THE PEOPLE

DOING IT AS "INVADERS." WE WILL STICK TO THAT, I'M
NOT GOING TO CHANGE IT.

4. Q: IN OTHER WORDS WE DISAGREE WITH TANZANIA THAT'S
PRETTY CLOSE TO THE SCENE? THEY'VE DESCRIBED IT AS
ONLY AN INTERNAL MATTER.

A: I'M GIVING YOU WHAT OUR POSITION ON IT IS.

5. Q: I'D LIKE TO FOLLOW THAT UP IF I MAY. THE
WASHINGTON POST REPORTS THAT THE ARMY OF ZAIRE IS IN
EFFECT CRUMBLING AND THAT GEN. MOBUTU WILL NOT COMMIT
HIS PARATROOPERS TO COMBAT IN SHABA EVEN THOUGH THE
U.S.-SUPPLIED SHIPMENTS INCLUDED PARACHUTES, AND I'M
WONDERING IS THE REPORT ACCURATE OR INACCURATE?

A: I DON'T HAVE ANY REACTION TO THAT AT ALL.

6. Q: NO COMMENT AT ALL?

A: I DON'T HAVE ANY REACTION TO THAT AT ALL.

7. Q: TO WHAT PART?

A: TO THE NEWSPAPER REPORT.

8. Q: YOU HAVE NO REACTION AT...?
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A: I READ THE REPORT BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY REACTION TO
IT.
IT.

9. Q: DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING NEW ON THE SITUATION IN
ZAIRE, EITHER ON THE GROUND, THE DIPLOMATIC MOVES, OR
THE REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE?

A: I DON'T. THE SUPPLEMENTARY REQUEST REMAINS UNDER
STUDY. ON THE GROUND, AS YESTERDAY, THERE'S REALLY
NOTHING TO REPORT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW. THERE DOES
NOT APPEAR TO BE A GREAT DEAL OF ACTIVITY.

10. Q: WHAT'S THE NATURE OF THAT SUPPLEMENTARY REQUEST?

A: I HAVEN'T SAID. I JUST MENTIONED IT THE OTHER DAY,
THAT THERE IS A SUPPLEMENTARY REQUEST AND WE HAVE NOT
GONE INTO DETAIL AS TO WHAT IT CONTAINS.

11. Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHY THERE ISN'T A GREAT DEAL OF ACTIVITY?

A: NO.

12. Q: WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THAT TO?

A: I DON'T ATTRIBUTE IT SO... I MAKE NO ATTRIBUTION....

13. Q: HAS NIGERIA HELPED BRING IT DOWN TO NOT A GREAT DEAL OF ACTIVITY?

A: I CAN'T GIVE YOU A CLEAR APPRECIATION OF WHAT AFFECT THE NIGERIAN DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE MAY HAVE HAD THUS FAR. PROBABLY WOULD RESERVE ANY JUDGMENT ON THAT SCORE FOR ANOTHER SEVERAL DAYS.

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14. Q: HAS IT BEEN POSSIBLE TO ASCERTAIN THE NATIONALITY OF THE WHITE PERSONS WHO WERE SEEN AMONG THOSE PEOPLE YOU JUST CALLED INVADERS?

A: I HAVE NO INDICATION OR MORE PRECISE IDENTIFICATION OR JUDGMENT ON THAT BEYOND WHAT WE'VE GIVEN YOU BEFORE.

15. Q: WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE YOUR POSITION THEN, IF YOU COULD SUMMARIZE WHAT YOU'VE GIVEN US BEFORE. WHAT IS THE NATIONALITY?

A: WE'VE SAID THERE COULD BE A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES. ANGOLANS WITH WHITE FACES, THEY COULD BE CUBANS, THEY

COULD BE MERCENARIES, THEY COULD BE OTHER PEOPLE, AND THE QUESTION HAS BEEN POSED IN TERMS OF WHETHER OR NOT THE CUBANS WERE INVOLVED AND WE'VE SAID, AND WE CONTINUE TO SAY, THAT WE HAVE REALLY NO FIRM, NO CONFIRMATION OF THE FACT THAT THEY'RE DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

16. Q: WHO ARE THE ANGOLANS THAT HAVE WHITE FACES? IS THERE A LIGHT SKIN TRIBE THERE OR...?

A: THERE HAS BEEN A LIGHT SKIN TRIBE THERE FOR ABOUT 400 YEARS.

17. Q: YEAH, RIGHT, ARE THERE ANY PORTUGUESE LEFT IN ANGOLA TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

A: I DON'T KNOW.

18. Q: YOU DON'T KNOW, WELL THEN WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT THERE ARE ANGOLANS WITH WHITE FACES...

A: THERE ARE ANGOLANS, I'M TOLD WITH LIGHT COMPLEXIONS...
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19. Q: YOU'RE DECLINING TO REVEAL WHAT IT IS THAT THE ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT IS REQUESTING IN THE WAY OF SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPLIES. AREN'T YOU CONCERNED AT ALL THAT THIS SUGGESTS THAT GEN. MOBUTU WANTS SOMETHING VERY HEAVY?

A: NO.

20. Q: YOU'RE NOT CONCERNED AT ALL?

A: NO.

21. Q: IN OTHER WORDS YOU SEE NO CONFLICT BETWEEN THIS AND THE OPEN FOREIGN POLICY?

A: NO.
CHRISTOPHER

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